THOMAS MANN'S NEW NOVEL: CARLOS BAKER

THE Nation

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June 19, 1954
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The "Anti-Communist Peril"

by Waldo Frank

Southeast Asia

The Critical Frontier

by Victor Purcell

EVERY WEEK SINCE 1865

Two Atom-Age Films — *Alexander Werth*

Paris and Geneva — *J. Alvarez del Vayo*

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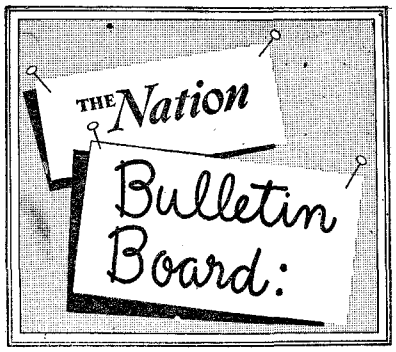

BEFORE YOU settle down to read Waldo Frank's provocative article in this issue, I warn you to equip yourself with paper and pencil. Opinion around the office is that Mr. Frank's excursion into the left-of-center political world is going to set new records for letters to the editor.

THE COURSE of true love, however smoothly it runs, doesn't make things smoother for editors. Anticipating a manuscript from R. H. S. Crossman, British Labor M. P., our managing editor received instead the following cable: HONEYMOON STARTING FRIDAY NEXT HAS DISTRACTED MY ATTENTION STOP BACK IN JULY.

EVERY TIME I look up, our drama critic, Harold Clurman, is off on another project. Recently he told me he had arranged with Rinehart to do a biography of Eugene O'Neill—which he plans to deliver in about a year. Now word comes that after the summer he will be handling the road revival of Shaw's "Saint Joan," starring Jean Arthur; after that comes direction of the new Rodgers and Hammerstein show "Pipe Dream," based on the John Steinbeck book "Sweet Thursday." And in the spring of 1955 he will be in London to stage Jean Giraudoux's "La Guerre de Troi N'Aura Pas Lieu" ("The Trojan War Will Not Be Fought").

NEXT WEEK we will be telling you about a brilliant satirical article by Arthur ("Death of a Salesman") Miller scheduled to appear in *The Nation* for July 10. Meanwhile, we will remind you that Miller was recently invited by the Société Belgo-Américain to come to Brussels for the opening of his play, "The Crucible," but that the State Department stalled on his request for a passport until it was too late. Miller writes us:

At the opening of "The Crucible" were ministers of the Belgian government, a representative of the King, many other high dignitaries of the diplomatic circle, including the American ambassador, and the entire staff of the United States Information Service. The audience and cast had been told that I would be present. Since I wasn't, and since the production was a vast success, I assume the Ambassador received congratulations in my stead. This makes me feel . . . that my taxes have not all gone to waste. I was not charged extra to pay for an alternate to sit in at one of my openings. Think of all the time and trouble this gentleman saved me; the tuxedo I never had to have pressed, the exhaustion after late hours I avoided, the French wine I didn't have to force down my throat, the mental agony of trying to remember the future imperfect of *vouloir*. . . . Oh, yes indeed, we are getting full value for our tax dollar. In fact, I foresee the day when playwrights will not even be necessary; when an American play opens abroad they will simply have the local United States representative coming on stage to take a bow, the general understanding being that while he did not actually write the play just performed, he does have a passport, and any American who has a passport deserves any acclaim which the European public has a desire to tend him.

IN VIEW of the interest in Fort Monmouth aroused by the army vs. McCarthy hearings, we have obtained a supply of the report just issued by the Scientists' Committee on Loyalty of the Federation of American Scientists. This independent investigation of Monmouth deals with the charges and implications of the McCarthy committee, the charges made by the army, and the sworn affidavits in reply to those charges from the persons involved. Over 120 charges are summarized, and those against six persons are given in detail.

You can order copies of this revealing and important report directly from this magazine for only 75 cents a copy, postpaid. Just send your orders, plus 75 cents, to *The Nation*, 333 Sixth Avenue, New York 14, N. Y.

MARTIN SOLOW

Letters

Trumbull Park Riots

Dear Sirs: The article by Robert Gruenberg on the Trumbull Park racial disturbances in Chicago in your May 22 issue is accurate, but it contains one implication which should be explained. The author quotes Donald Howard, the Negro tenant who finally moved from the project, as saying that "well-meaning human-relations experts have visited me . . . with the view that my continued occupancy of an apartment . . . represents a threat to civil peace." Howard's statement is unfair to at least the 100 organizations of the Council Against Discrimination, which, through its Trumbull Park Homes Committee, made no such representations. Indeed, most of us feel that the police official who helped Howard find another apartment was working quite outside his jurisdiction. The "solution" to the riots is good policing, not the removal of any Negro families.

HOMER A. JACK,
Chairman, Trumbull Park Homes Committee Council Against
Evanston, Ill. Discrimination

Scholarship Scheme

Dear Sirs: Henry J. Taylor, journalist and radio commentator, reported recently that the President appeared deeply concerned when he (Taylor) informed him that Russian universities were turning out twice as many engineers as were our own. The article Defense Monopoly, by Leland Traywick, which appeared in your May 29 issue, suggests a solution. If the government had accepted the Bullard Company's bid of $30,000 per lathe instead of the Fisher Body Corporation's $90,000 bid, as related by Mr. Traywick, approximately $48,000,000 could have been saved. This sum could have furnished 48,000 American engineering students with a $1,000 scholarship each.

Exeter, Calif. ALFRED HENGST

Wanted: a Party

Dear Sirs: The Socialist Party of the United States is almost as dead as the Dickensian door nail, now that it is no longer running Presidential candidates. I have no other ready-made party to turn to and so would like to start an organization similar to the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation of Canada (C. C. F.). Interested persons can contact me at 977 North Wilton Place, Los Angeles 38, California. IRVING MANDELL

Los Angeles

Schools and Delinquency

Dear Sirs: The Delinquent: Society or the Juvenile? by Milton L. Barron [issue of June 5] . . . seems much more balanced and sensible than much of the discussion

(*Continued on inside back cover*)

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Volume 178, Number 25
New York, Saturday, June 19, 1954

THE Nation
EVERY WEEK SINCE 1865

EDITORIALS

Paris and Geneva . . . by J. Alvarez del Vayo

United Nations

EARLY last week Pierre Mendès-France, most persuasive spokesman for France's anti-war faction, drew applause from Socialists, Gaullists, and Communists alike when he declared: "Even as the enemy stood at the gates of Paris in 1914, the deputies did not hesitate to overturn the Cabinet in order to insure final victory." A few days later the French Assembly took him at his word and in effect voted the Laniel regime out of existence.

The overturn occurred as Molotov and Chou En-lai, stiffening their position at Geneva, were insisting that the conference debate a political solution in Indo-China simultaneously with the military aspects of the proposed cease-fire. At the same time Secretary Dulles, in Washington, was making it clear that at least for the time being the Americans proposed to do precisely nothing to help the French save the Red River Delta. The three developments are intimately related and taken together throw light upon a complicated picture.

The Vietminh's terms for a cease-fire have steadily grown harsher as their military position in northern Indo-China has improved. In the light of the situation on the battlefront, the Russians and Chinese believe a cease-fire which would leave in French hands the area around Hanoi and Haiphong, the Tonkin Gulf port fifty miles east of the northern capital, must be considered as grounded in generosity. Implicit in the offer is the threat that, if the French spurn it, Ho Chi-minh has only to expend a little more time and effort and the entire delta, including the two cities, will be in his hands. Molotov, by demanding discussion of a political settlement which would affect not only Vietnam but also Laos and Cambodia, is seeking to secure Ho's future position. For at the back of his mind is undoubtedly the thought that the West must never be able to use Laos and Cambodia as a springboard from which a Southeast Asian alliance could one day seek military redress. Molotov's text of June 8 reveals the great emphasis placed on "the continued scheming to create a so-called Southeast Asia military bloc headed by the United States and including some of the colonial powers and their most obedient satellites."

The fall of the Laniel government puts the West in a still more difficult position at Geneva. The French Parliament has turned down not merely Messrs. Laniel and Bidault but also a foreign policy which has linked France to the West. A distaste for both E.D.C. and for the course of events as regards Indo-China were the primary factors in the voting. Even the supporters of M. Laniel agreed that a cease-fire must be achieved in Indo-China, while those who opposed him, not because he was not ready enough to negotiate but because in their view he was not ready enough to fight, were forced to review their position when Secretary Dulles let it be known that hope of any immediate American intervention was gone. The timing as well as the text of the Dulles statement stunned the French pro-war elements.

Under the circumstances no government which President Coty may succeed in forming will be able to continue the policy of M. Bidault, based as it was on the hope that the United States would eventually come to France's aid. It was this hope which encouraged M. Bidault to show a "truculence" toward the Communists at Geneva for which leading British newspapers have been reproaching him. The London *Observer,* for instance, gently reminded M. Bidault that so far in the war it is not the French who are winning but the Vietminh.

THAT the French who counted on American help were not entirely indulging in wishful thinking is indicated in a remarkable article published June 7 by the Washington *Post and Times Herald,* according to which twice in April Washington was on the verge of throwing air forces into the war. "The Eisenhower Administration," the newspaper said, "even set a tentative date for an air strike to aid the then besieged fortress of Dienbienphu. The date was April 28, two days after the opening of the Geneva conference." In the end, apparently, it was British opposition which dissuaded Washington.

Speaking about the zigzags in American foreign policy, Walter Lippmann wrote in the New York *Herald Tribune* of June 10: "The root of the trouble is that the Administration is divided within itself between a war party and a peace party—between those who believe it

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The Nation, June 19, 1954. Volume 178, No. 25
The Nation, published weekly and copyright, 1954, in the U. S. A. by The Nation Associates, Inc., 333 Sixth Avenue, New York 14, N. Y. Entered as second-class matter, December 13, 1879, at the Post Office of New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Advertising and Circulation Representatives for Continental Europe: Publicitas.
Subscription Prices: Domestic—One year $7; Two years $12; Three years $17. Additional postage per year: Foreign and Canadian $1.
Change of Address: Three weeks' notice is required for change of address, which cannot be made without the old address as well as the new.
Information to Libraries: The Nation is indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Index to Labor Articles, Public Affairs Information Service, Dramatic Index.

necessary and desirable to make war against Red China and those who want to contain the expansion of the Communist power without precipitating World War III. This is the division which is paralyzing our foreign policy."

But there is another paralyzing element. What Mr. Lippmann terms the "peace party" nevertheless continues to oppose both diplomatic recognition of Communist China and its admission into the United Nations. Thus the proponents of peace have nothing to offer the Communists, no stock-in-trade to set upon the bargain counter. The "peace party" offers no alternative to war except a continuation of a cold war which has been rendered obsolete, at least in the Far East, by the unchecked advance of the Vietminh.

Thus Washington, split down the middle, is unable to make either war or peace—a situation which this magazine anticipated a long time ago. Not until the political problems underlying the present international situation are faced with realism and intelligence can the Indo-China problem be solved. It is in this regard that Washington's indecisiveness has most profoundly affected the course of events at Geneva.

GENEVA is furnishing new proof that there can be no sound foreign policy when diplomatic and military strategy do not match. Western diplomacy at Geneva has been ignoring the situation on the battlefield. The conference has now been reduced to three basic issues: (1) whether Laos and Cambodia are to be treated separately from Vietnam; (2) whether the armistice supervisory commission shall include Communists; and (3) whether the commission shall have the power to make binding decisions by majority vote. On these issues the French delegation has been taking a position as uncompromising as the American. Even so conservative a commentator as Raymond Aron of *Le Figaro* has been reminding M. Bidault that in order to please the Americans the French have put themselves in a contradictory situation. Did not the United States accept the Communist Czechs and Poles on the Korean armistice commission? And the United States did so, Aron reminded Bidault, "not because it had any illusions about them but because it wanted an armistice."

Events at Geneva during the last few weeks showed that at certain moments the adversaries at Geneva were approaching agreement on some details at least and that with further effort a deadlock might have been broken. But as this is written, the conference has been brought practically to a standstill by the French Cabinet crisis. The time could be used for private negotiations looking toward a resumption of formal talks on the basis of greater realism. But unfortunately there are many people who are anxious to use the French crisis in order to bring the conference to an abrupt and final end.

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"ANTI-COMMUNIST PERIL"

Rediscovering Our Roots . . *by Waldo Frank*

With this article by Waldo Frank, novelist and cultural critic, The Nation *opens a debate on a major problem of our time—the fragmentation of the liberal movement in America. We believe Mr. Frank's controversial thesis will provoke a wide variety of comment from our readers, for which we are reserving space in future issues. Few subjects are more important to liberal America than this; and few writers could have treated it in so stimulating a fashion as has Mr. Frank, whose views are not necessarily shared by the editors.*—EDITORS THE NATION.

"The freedom of the world depends on the health of America."—*Bolivar.*

THE army-McCarthy hearings staged a wrestling match of ignorance and confusion at grips with skilled and cynical skulduggery, so theatrical that it blurred the show's main meaning. Deeply, it was a counter-revolutionary diversion, a fixed bout of communism versus conformism, as if these were the sole alternatives before the country; as if our values and institutions were immaculate and we were threatened exclusively by villains taking orders from Moscow. This points to a failure of intelligence which, in a revolutionary world, is fatal. When the unspeakable Roy Cohn, presumably an educated man, can answer Mr. Jenkins's request for a definition of communism with a statement that would shame a bright schoolboy of ten—a statement gleaned from the "authoritative" writings of a gilded jackanapes named G. David Schine—and be challenged by no Senator, no learned counsel (no one apparently being aware that to ignore the nature of one's enemy is a danger), the cause must be sought in the intellectual and spiritual condition of the country. This condition I call the "anti-Communist peril." It is vital to diagnose it.

First it must be clearly stated that there is a Communist peril, mouthed a million times each day but always without clarity. It has several major aspects: (1) The direct "strong-arm" method. An instance was the literal murder of the P. O. U. M., Spain's popular revolutionary party of Socialists, Anarchists, and Syndicalists, when it invited Trotsky to come to Barcelona. (2) In Eastern Europe, after the second war, the Red Army by sheer pressure of numbers imposed political satraps who, although they had strong support from the native peasants and proletariat, took their orders from Moscow. It must, however, not be forgotten that in these countries the alternative to the Communists was not democracy but the old pre-war fascists. (3) In Czechoslovakia the process was merely more subtle. The native Communists infiltrated the united democratic front. Their apparent sincerity and forthright economic program won them wide support in labor, the intelligentsia, and the villages. But when, thanks largely to this, the local Communists were "in" (they had promised a *democratic* sovietism with free press and free elections), the Moscow machine swiftly took over, liquidating the domestic idealists and within a year estranging labor.

These primitive forms of the Communist peril are aspects of Russian imperialism complicated by the element of fear—fear that Trotsky would acquire a nation, fear of the capitalist iron ring that had almost murdered Lenin's revolution, and so on. (4) The Communist peril, as it exists *for us* in Asia, is already a far more complex structure. To the landless Asian peasant with absolutely no experience in democratic action, communism is a definite step forward; and its ideology—on which Mao and other leaders expatiate like schoolboys—has many points of appeal to intellectuals whose values have been molded in the decadent Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism of our day. To these peoples communism is hardly a peril—except in so far as the West unconsciously and impudently assumes that Asia's happiness depends on its continued subordination to us. If as a result of this assumption we antagonize Asia—the Indians no less than the Chinese—we may have cause to fear that the enemy we have created might move against us. (Even a military victory over China would, through exhaustion, destroy us as completely as an atomic attack.) But it should be clear to any mind not shackled to crude egocentricity that the Communist peril of the Orient is in large part our creation, and that it is inclosed within what might be called the "capialist peril"—the basic attitude of the United States, which has supported the exploiters of disinherited peoples and offended enlightened anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist leaders such as Nehru, and which insanely ignores the whole gamut of Oriental realities. The Communist peril, therefore, as it exists today for us in Asia, and as it may well exist tomorrow in America Hispana, has for one of its basic factors the aggressiveness of our capitalist values and the fear we both feel and inspire when these values are opposed.

(5) Another form of the Communist peril: its direct existence at home in the infiltration of our labor unions by Communist-led fractions and of our public offices by spies. Without hysteria such leaders as the late Philip Murray and C. I. O.'s Walter Reuther have through long years fought this threat by democratic methods, defeating it. Not communism, not socialism, not syndicalism has roots in American labor. As to espionage in high places, an endemic problem of all world powers which exchange diplomatic representatives while they jockey and plot—the lurid klieg lights of all the trials and all the committees

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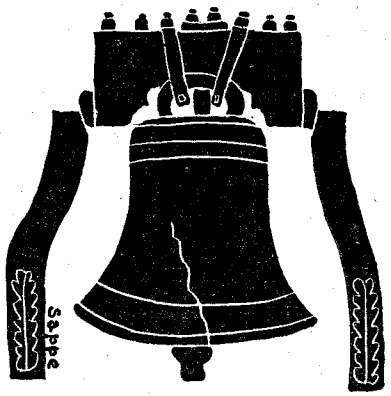
have made it clear that in the dangerous American world this is a puny peril, amply handled by the routine techniques of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

This Is Our Peril

The true Communist peril in the United States is seldom named, although our tragic bungling in Asia spells it out plainly. It can be identified only in relation with its foe, its *frère ennemi*—the capitalist system. The existence of either peril, in fact, implies the existence of the other, since they are related and *rival* products of decadent trends in Western culture. The mechanization of man, the regimentation of groups, the wholesale depersonalization of the human being as an economic (finally military) unit are symptoms of communism and capitalism alike, because they are implicit in the values from which both cultures—directly capitalism, indirectly communism—have sprung. Our civilization of production, sale, and profit, of syndicated ballyhoo and televised pressure (less complicated in the United States than in Western Europe by surviving values of the Judaeo-Christian tradition) corresponds to what in crasser form we hate in Russia. The effect of our fraudulent "liberties," herding man, softening his head and callousing his senses, grinding and depleting his imagination until his consciousness becomes a stereotype, with the universal experience of the mystic, the saint, the artist finally extruded, must correspond ultimately to our reports of what is happening in Russia and China. This is our peril. Not daring to face or name it at home, how comfortable to hate it abroad and to call it the "Communist peril"! So be it. This, then, is the form of it so widespread, so devastating, so invincible that all its other forms fade by contrast. What the Stalinists achieve through a gangster police, we in our more enlightened republic urbanely grind men down to by debasing our wills, malnourishing our minds, blinding our spiritual vision.

This is not accident. In their basic values both capitalism and communism are heresies of the eighteenth-century empirical philosophies of Europe, and of the great seventeenth-century delusion that the cosmos is a mechanical device—a delusion which Isaac Newton and the other great men of science, whose successes inspired it, were far too wise to accept. Within both cultures true human values are professed—man's right to the fruits of his labor, man's need of elementary justice before he is free to love, man's liberty to overthrow his tyrants and to seek for knowledge. And in both are false interpretations, implicit or expressed, of man as primarily a "product" of "conditions," an economic animal. Industrial capital-



ism in its youth was as virulent and cruel as its technics permitted: witness the foreign policy of the British Empire from 1700 to 1900, its slave trade, its children of seven years toiling in the mills, its smoke-sodden cities. Now on the defensive and fat, capitalism grows genteel; whereas communism has the crassness of youth, the explosiveness of peoples until recently enslaved, exploited, threatened—peoples never tinctured, as was the Western world, by the social justice and the tenderness of the Judaeo-Christian tradition.

If it were not for the fact that every country judges itself by its intentions and its opponent by its deeds, communism and capitalism could lie down amorously together. I do not ignore differences that are vital for those now living. I realize, for instance, that if I were in Russia what I write could not be printed and its author would be *spurlos versenkt*. But I am discussing basic trends—which converge. By fiat and jail Russia clumsily achieves what the capitalist United States brings about indirectly through the spiritual and intellectual malnutrition of its money-minded institutions. If the two sister-systems should clash in open war—which God forbid!—the differences would die in the radioactive rubble. The piteous survivors in both camps—ah, yes, there might be survivors!—would be man once more in chaos, regimented by necessity, lobotomized of sensitivity and imagination by the sheer anguish of breathing, with his native search of the cosmos and the God within him again at its very beginning.

Thus the deepest, certainly the most immediate, form of the Communist peril in our land is to be found in the trend of *our* values and *our* institutions, moving toward man's dehumanization. And who voices these values? The anti-Communist crusaders. In so far as they implicitly or explicitly defend our social order, from which man is *practically* excluded, as he is excluded in theory from the ideology of the Marxist church and in brutal fact from Communist political action, they, the professional Communist-haters, are encysted within the Communist peril. And I am not thinking of McCarthy.

Gods That Failed

Long before McCarthy dreamed of hoisting himself into the United States Senate, American intellectuals—let us take Max Eastman and Sidney Hook as preeminent examples—who had been deep in the Communist movement had turned bitterly against it. As pragmatists, positivists, disciples of the scientism of John Dewey, they had felt at home in the Marxist philosophy. All it needed, they were sure, to win the world was to be freed of a few "mystical" undertones which Marx, too close to Hegel and his prophet-fathers, had not quite deleted from his "materialist" history or from his "intelligence" that both Marx and Dewey defined as the empirical instrument that should control it. Marxism they saw as a problem in social engineering, like building a bridge across a river. When it went wrong in Russia, they felt outraged and became crusading anti-Communists. But they did not question their philosophy; they did not guess that the corruption of socialism into a machine of power was organically related to their own pragmatist concept of the intelligence and of man as totally conditioned social products. Being natural heirs of the Judaeo-Christian ethics, these men were horrified by the works of Stalin. Also they had been repelled by basic features of the capitalist system: why else espouse the cause of revolution? Now, gradually, their dismay at the Communist god who had turned

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demon filled their consciousness, to the exclusion of the critical view of their own world which had moved them, generous-hearted youths, to become rebels. Their shallow sense of the reality of human nature gave them no instrument for understanding what had happened, what *had* to happen to a social doctrine which shared their view. It gave them no understanding of the analogous if milder processes of man's humiliation at home. With no perspective in depth to make them see communism and capitalism as diverging products *of the same source,* they rejected communism, as sons of Christians and of Jews who must abhor prison camps and the police state. But, undefended by a true philosophy of human nature, the very violence of their rejection of Russia maneuvered them toward gradually accepting communism's "sibling" opponent—the American capitalist system.

Why did this vomiting-up of communism generate such passion that these believers in man as a total product of empirical conditions began to rant, like fundamentalist revivalists, of "absolute evil"? Because by the principles of their philosophy of "human engineering" the Communists should have been paragons of virtue and because they had been unfaithful and had betrayed their positivist lovers! Why was their once revolutionary criticism of American society gradually transformed into its tolerant acceptance—as a fierce Bengal tiger might turn into a luxurious tabby? Because, after all, despite its Judaeo-Christian tradition and its churches, the United States lived by materialist and pragmatist values which their own view of man supported, and yet managed lip-service to their inherited ethic. If they had been deeper logicians they would have understood how the melodramatic "evil" of Russia was related to the treacherous "good" of America. But as deep logicians they would not have been pragmatists—or Marxists—in the first place.

Max Eastman and Sidney Hook are not attacked here as individuals. They are archetypes of the hundreds, if not thousands, of Americans who since the 1930's, usually with far less skill and honesty and power, have shaped the intellectual phase of the anti-Communist crusade. The crux about nearly all of them is that in the romantic era of Russian sovietism, the 1920's, when all men of good-will were moved to defend the Bolsheviks against the encircling capitalist armies, these intellectuals had no *ideological* quarrel with Marxist communism. They did not see, in its official creed, values that were bound to corrupt socialist power. If they jumped off the Red bandwagon, it was because they did not like the Trotsky trials or the starvation of the kulaks or the muzzled press or the pact with Hitler: specific results horrified them, not their generic causes.

There were, of course, from the start, men who rejected communism because of its specious values and its false vision of man, and who for the same deep reasons were critics of *our* culture. But these creative men never became leaders in the anti-Communist crusade. They were, and are, largely ignored. Dozens of littler Hooks and Hickses harangue the pack; who listens to a Lewis Mumford? (If Reinhold Niebuhr seems an exception—like Mumford he is a writer with positive values which he applies to a critique of our culture, who nevertheless has a wide public among the anti-Communists—it is only because in his political pieces he carefully deletes all but the vaguest trace of his religious and theological convictions, which he expounds in his admirable books. These have a totally distinct group of readers; it is doubtful that many of the bloodthirsty anti-Communist crusaders read them.)

Ignazio Silone predicted: "The battle for the future will be waged between Communists and ex-Communists." This is nonsense, but illuminating. For it reveals the failure of even so gifted a poet as Silone to recognize that the future—if it is to have a place for Man—can be created only by the rediscovery in modern terms of basic realities in man which both communism and its current enemy implicitly or explicitly deny. Until then the crusade will be impotent; and good men like himself, who have failed to reach the roots of the problem, will be expendable.

The descent of Russian-led communism from the seed-days of Lenin and Trotsky proceeded swiftly, never abandoning its premises of *man's humiliation* discernible in the philosophies of these great men—and in Marx, and indeed in Hegel, most systematic annihilator of the person. By analogy the respectable work of such archetypes as Eastman and Hook contains in germ the obsessive hysteria, the demonology, the final toadyism to our civilization and its leaders, exemplified in such journals as the *New Leader, Commentary,* and the *Partisan Review.* These magazines have published many excellent articles on divers subjects. But through the years they have established a mood and a mode which may be characterized as a constant and sterile polemic against the Communists—not even against communism as a system of thought—which never examines historically, never analyzes psychologically, never constructs philosophically. Instead, "the gangsters" are exposed—*ad infinitum* and *ad nauseam.* Communism is confounded with Nazism; communism is comfortably exorcised as "absolute evil."

The integrity and talents of the authors of "The God Who Failed" register with poignance the failure of these representatives of a generation—all ex-Communists, all presumed to be social thinkers—to reach the threshold of intellectual maturity. Their "confessions" produce not one word of basic diagnosis of the roots of the faith for which they were once ready to give their lives. Eric Josephson has compiled quotations from the professional anti-Communist magazines which read like an anthology of hysteria, political compan-

Duty of the Intellectual

FREEDOM of thought and communication has to be protected by government, and in the last analysis by the political action of a people resolutely and intelligently devoted to a cause. And here the more trained and emancipated minds have a peculiar responsibility—of which they need not feel ashamed. . . . There is a tendency among the comparatively cerebral members of the population to apologize for their peculiarity, as though it were a sort of deformity. Those who have heads should wear them not ostentatiously but proudly, and with a sense of responsibility. They should not remain silent and leave speech to those who have nothing of their own to say.—*Ralph Barton Perry, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy, Harvard University.*

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ion piece to Flaubert's dictionary of bourgeois follies. A high pythoness of literary *"précieuse ridicule-ism"* exhorts Owen Lattimore "to confess" his Communist taint (because he does not advise war against China); and when Mr. Lattimore demurs, admits that she is tempted to "frame him." Another declares heretic and worthy of damnation any man who admits a Communist might glimpse the truth on any subject.

The total picture is of panic and stampede; the destination, of course, *conformity*. Thus, in 1952 the *Partisan Review* published a symposium on Our Country and Our Cultures in which a group of authors profess, as the editors put it, that they "regard America and its institutions in a new way. . . . The tide has begun to turn, and many writers and intellectuals now feel closer to their country and their culture. . . . Politically, there is recognition that the kind of democracy which exists in America has an intrinsic and positive value: it is not merely a capitalist myth but a reality which must be defended against Russian totalitarianism."

What a pity that Thoreau, Emerson, the Whitman of "Democratic Vistas" had no Russian Satan to help them overlook the slight flaws in American life and bring them closer to their country and their culture! Peter Viereck, anxious and homesick, intoxicates himself with the noble old words and seeking to save them calls for a "new conservatism," forgetting that all the old words, from God to love, come alive only through the birth travail of each generation. Finally, when the dangerous frontier of creative criticism has been abandoned, the outpost every decent writer must hold in a time of crisis, conformity sinks to toadyism. Whittaker Chambers, wedding his "God" with Mr. Luce, is of course a repulsive example. Or the editor of *Commentary* whose criticism of American life once brought him close to the Communists without criticism of *their* values. He writes:

> Our citizenry have shown little serious tendency to succumb to panic, divisiveness, hysteria, or hate. . . . The record shows no political persecution. . . . As for that mother of all nightmares, the threat of a domestic fascism . . . where are its signs? As for McCarthy, he remains in the popular mind an unreliable, second-string blowhard: *his only support as a great national figure is from the fascinated fears of the intelligentsia.* (My italics.)

This calls itself "affirmation."

Basis of McCarthyism

There are honorable exceptions. In a new magazine, *Dissent*, good men, such as Norman Mailer, a gifted novelist, and the conscientious sociologist, Irving Howe, insist that their rejection of communism shall not disqualify their rejection of the current American order. Thus far, they have not progressed to a creative beginning of positive values. The negative of their title reveals their embryonic state. May they grow beyond it! Meanwhile the norm among the anti-Communist intellectuals is a low level of submission, where poet becomes prostitute and "reformed" radical becomes "informer." And it is here that contact is made with the second phase of anti-communism, the popular, the one exploited by McCarthy.

We must not lose our distinctions. The intellectual who abhors Communist tactics and fears Communist strategy is sane. The intellectual who perceives and rejects the dehumanizing principles in communism is strong. But the intellectual who has never diagnosed communism's key view of life and, in other forms, shares it, venting his hate upon certain of its products to defend his complacence and to conceal his insecurity, is a public danger. By analogy the common citizen who hates Communist "elections," Communist labor camps, Communist police politics is thus far healthy; who recognizes the shallow muddle of Communist philosophy is a true son of Thoreau and Whitman. But if he permits the Communist danger, whatever it truly is, to crowd out from his sight all self- and social criticism, and from his deed the generous fair play of the American tradition, he too is a neurotic and a public danger.

The cheap success of McCarthy showmanship proves the prosperity of this peril, and we must understand it. Hitler incarnated the neurosis of a nation: this was his genius. McCarthy does not express, he exploits, a still vague hysteria in the people. But why should the rich, comfortable, potent American people be so hysterical as to give McCarthy a continuous hearing?

Is it possible that we suspect our wealth, our comfort, our power? and that this suspicion gives us a guilty conscience? Children of a religious tradition, we still believe in sin. Children also of a younger faith which replaced the search for salvation with the "pursuit of happiness," we feel that want of wealth, want of comfort, want of power is tantamount to sin. God came with us across the sea and we strove to follow what we believed to be his command—"plain living and high thinking." But we stamped his name on the dollar; and long since, the machine and the economics of our ego began to interfere with this way of life. Living became complicated, luxurious—the contrary of "plain." High thinking became a deterrent to trade. We still felt it sinful to live contrary to God's laws; so we changed the laws. It became "God's will" that Americans live wealthy, comfortable, and with power, and that these be the fruit of our virtue. Somehow it has not worked, and we suspect it. Tragedy, which we had outlawed, persists. All our wealth and gadgets do not bring us comfort. And all our power does not succeed in making two billion East Europeans, Asians, and Latin Americans behave as we do! Hence, frustration we cannot admit. Disguise it! Find a devil, afield in the world, ambushed in every bureaucratic desk, in every liberal's skin, to explain the refusal of the world to sustain our sense of virtue by behaving as we do! Enter the Communist peril—and its parasite, the anti-Communist peril.

It is to be noted that McCarthy, in

In Nobility's Name

HISTORY shows that governments bent on a crusade or officials filled with ambitions have usually been inclined to take short cuts. The cause being a noble one (for it always is), the people being filled with alarm (for they usually are), the government being motivated by worthy aims (as it always professes), the demand for quick and easy justice mounts.

These short cuts are not as flagrant, perhaps, as a lynching. But the ends they produce are cumulative, and if they continue unabated they can silently rewrite even the fundamental law of the nation.—*Justice William O. Douglas.*

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all his millions of words, has devoted not a dozen to an analysis of communism, which must remain a gas in order to take the shape of every fear, every frustration. The same motive in part explains the mental sleaziness of the anti-Communist intellectuals. We have been a people that *sought,* and our writers of maturity ennobled this search, linking it with the world's need. We are in danger of becoming a people that *holds on,* with our most vocal writers pandering to the fear that holding-on engenders. Many have suspected that Americans feel an unconscious guilt at having dropped the atom bomb on Japanese cities. But this is the grossest symbol, almost the caricature of our feeling. We feel guilt because our philosophy outlaws tragedy from life, and tragedy is here. We feel guilt because the world with its disfavor constantly reminds us that *we ourselves* never succeed in quite admiring the well-fed, well-ordered animals we profess to be. We feel guilt because we feel rage at the frustration of our power, which should make us, we believe, the whole world's leaders, whereas we are preparing to become a minority nation in a minority hemisphere.

This state of confusion, and methods to transform it, should be the theme of our socio-political writers. Assume, although there is no proof of it, that the Communists have planned a military conquest of the Occident. In a healthy people this would inspire the most objective search of strengths and weaknesses, and above all of possible realms of contact with the potential foe, which might generate understanding, sympathy, even love between us. Who, if not the intellectuals, should know that such positive resources are infinitely more valid in the prevention of war than armies and brittle, ephemeral pacts? Who, if not they, seeing in our land and in our state the panic and egocentric blindness which peril brings to ignorance, should insist on their duty to challenge the roots whence the peril has sprung? Yet the bitter truth is that our anti-Communist hysterics continue to make it impossible for the Russian intellectuals to exert a benign influence on their state; and encourage such madness as the stockpiling of atomic weapons which, even if the bombs are never used, may well destroy the weakening fabric of our culture. For not man is threatened today. Man is rising and may well proceed, having taken from us what he needs, without the presence of our civilization. It is *our* world that is imperiled. And this is a tragic pity, for we have the seeds of truth in us which have never flowered and which other men in their own time must sow again if we fall.

It has been unjust, of course, to single out, as I have done, a few individuals and journals, except as samples of the rot in the intellectual and moral fiber of our country. What are we to say of an entire literary generation which crowned T. S. Eliot king—the impeccable "confidential clerk" of a dying order warding off the demands of a creative future? What of a nation of 160,000,000 with no political party matriced in the adequate life-values and knowledge of man's nature in which alone sound economic and political action can grow; so that a respectable conformist like Adlai Stevenson, because he is literate and honest, shines by contrast with the other politicians as if he were a flaming crusader?

Youth Must Search

The important question is: what shall our younger generation do? The answers are problems that transcend the limits of this paper. But this is certain. There will be little energy or time for the constant, vacuous scolding which is the anti-Communist's obsession. Communism in the United States is a problem so infinitesimally small compared to the perils of our own culture in all its phases that any intellectual who does not know this, and act on this, is by that fact proved a neurotic. As to the Communist danger in the world, the first approach to it—and the last—must be the creating of positive values at home; for it is the lack or weakness of such values that gives communism and Communist imperialism their strength.

The Hindus have a saying: "All growth is through a series of disgusts." This is true for the West only if the basis of the disgusts is the underlying love of life which rejects with disgust what is against life. Our younger generation must procreate its own leaders to express its love. Meanwhile, with all the disgust it can summon, this love—as it grows conscious of itself—will reject the old leaders, the false ones.

In the 1920's there was great ferment in the United States. We have recently heard much of it; in fact, the period has become a sort of romantic retreat for adolescents, with its own flaming adoles-

cents—Fitzgerald, Wolfe, Hemingway, —serving as its hosts. What has not been made clear is that the ferment failed because the basis of a true knowledge—aesthetic, metaphysical, national —was lacking. The young men, including those of genius, went on their expedition of creating an American culture without adequate arms or sight, and on an empty stomach. The campaign collapsed, in the twenties and thirties. Now, the American youth can know this. It can study the causes of the collapse, the false methods, and by rediscovery of the real roots of our culture evolve true methods for the re-creation which, in our time of peril, is salvation.

The auspices do not smile: a world we have almost globally antagonized; our energies flowing like a hemorrhage into the manufacture of genocidal instruments of "defense" and, even worse, into the expansion of a culture that corrodes, as it grows, our mental and spiritual fabric; a bankruptcy of political methods that has not yet inspired the will to understand why the methods fail. Yet the very ultimacy of the crisis may make such auspices good. The young men who challenge their teachers and deny their false fathers will feel isolated, until they find each other. Thoreau said: "There are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil to one who is striking at the root." These "ones" will be strong in knowing that they alone articulate the creative intuition of the people, that they alone truly represent the nation.

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LOUISIANA PURCHASE

Synthetic All the Way . . . *by Harry Levine*

Washington

STANDING idle on desolate coal fields near Louisiana, Missouri, is a vast conglomeration of giant retorts, furnaces, shafts, and conveyor belts. This once-powerful industrial plant, which cost $50,000,000 to build, has been quietly rusting away since March, 1953. Part of it was completed only eight months before the closing of the plant and was never used.

Built by the United States government to demonstrate the manufacture of synthetic fuel, the plant has just been leased to the Hercules Powder Company for six years for slightly above $2,000,000. Under the terms of the lease the company will retain an option to buy. Meanwhile it will not have to pay property taxes. At the time it was shut down the Louisiana plant was converting soft coal into synthetic liquid fuel at a cost within pennies of the cost of natural crude oil—and producing 100 barrels a day. It was the only large-scale demonstration plant of the kind in the country.

Late in 1952, just before the end of the Truman Administration, Oscar Chapman, then Secretary of the Interior, called in a dozen or so Senators to his office—among them Lister Hill, Wayne Morse, and Paul Douglas. After showing them performance charts of Louisiana, Chapman offered them some parting advice. "Keep an eye on this plant," he said. "As soon as the Republicans take over, they'll probably close it down. Then, after everything is quiet, it will be given away to industry." Chapman clearly foresaw the government give-away program with which we have now become all too familiar.

Louisiana was no small gift. Consider our present oil demands. We produce only 6,500,000 barrels of domestic oil daily, but we consume 7,500,000. The difference must be imported. In recent years this has become increasingly expensive. Last year Eugene Ayres, vice-president of the Gulf Research and Development Company and a widely recognized authority on the subject, told a power conference in Chicago: "The rest of the world is increasing its oil consumption more rapidly than we are. The most obvious explanation is that the rest of the world has a far greater margin for technological improvement and for potential demand than we have." From this Ayres concluded: "Imports should soon cost more because of competitive bidding from the rest of the world."

Then he added: "At first glance the picture of the future as drawn may seem rather dismal for the United States. But it happens that the United States is blessed with exceptional abundance of oil-shale and coal. Eventually the whole world must depend upon supplemental [synthetic] fuel sources, and about half the oil-shale and coal of the world is in the United States. If we feel we must do any worrying about the future we should concentrate our attention on the few decades of transition, starting before 1970, when we shall have less natural petroleum and the rest of the world more."

If Ayres's analysis was correct—and officials of the Interior Department believe it was—what was behind the decision to close the Louisiana plant and turn it over to private industry? Undoubtedly the biggest factor was pressure from the oil industry, specifically the National Petroleum Council. One official at the Bureau of Mines said to this writer: "We were going along fine with synthetic-fuel research until the Democrats started talking about large-scale production. That got the oil people all excited about the 'government going into the oil business,' and they have been breathing hot down our necks ever since."

The Administration's stated reasons for disposing of Louisiana are these: First, as announced by Secretary McKay on January 13, "the Interior Department will encourage private industry to assume primary responsibility as soon as any project reaches an advanced developmental stage." Second, "the cost of producing synthetic fuels from coal by known processes is discouragingly high"—to quote a Bureau of Mines statement. Third, according to a spokesman for the Interior Department, "we have learned everything we needed to know at Louisiana. There was no point in keeping it open any more."

HOW sound are these reasons? When Secretary McKay says private industry should be encouraged to assume "primary responsibility" he either has his tongue in his cheek or is being academic. At this stage the oil companies have no interest in coal, and the hard-pressed coal industry, already on a three-day week, certainly lacks the funds necessary for large-scale research. After spending $500,000 on a two-and-one-half-year study of production of oil from coal, the National Petroleum Council reached the conclusion that the process was "definitely uneconomical under present conditions." The lowest wholesale cost of gasoline made synthetically from coal, the council asserted, would be 29 cents a gallon.

Of course the oil men have an ax to grind, but one is surprised to find the Bureau of Mines in its program statement on synthetic liquid fuels published February, 1954, adopting the same figure—a complete turnabout from its previous estimates.

In February, 1948, the bureau hired the Bechtel Corporation, an engineering firm, to conduct a survey and, using Bechtel's figures, worked out an estimate of 13 to 15 cents a gallon—with the sale of by-products thrown in to bring the cost down. This was only a few pennies away from the prevailing wholesale price of commercial gasoline, 12 cents a gallon. The oil industry objected and promptly made estimates

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of its own—coming up with a cost of 40 cents a gallon, not figuring revenue from by-products.

The Bureau of Mines then went out and hired Ebasco Services, a highly respected New York engineering firm. Ebasco started from scratch. Late in 1950 it handed in a report that considered everything, right down to the cost of housing for workers if a commercial plant were built and to methods of obtaining private financing. The Ebasco report concluded that the cost of producing high-test gasoline from coal would be some 17 cents a gallon.

Ironically, no one has issued a report on the real cost of producing natural crude oil. At present federal law gives oil-well owners a 27½ per cent tax exemption on gross profits, because of the expendable nature of oil, but this exemption cannot be applied to the cost of synthetic oil. "If we were honest with our bookkeeping—that is, if the 27½ per cent exemption were granted to everyone—any number of kinds of synthetic oil could sell for as little as or less than natural crude," one scientist at the Bureau of Mines told this writer.

The government's third and last contention, that it has already learned at Louisiana everything it needed to know, is the shakiest. Dr. Henry H. Storch, chief of the synthetic-fuels division of the Interior Department, said to this writer a few weeks ago: "I still feel it would be desirable to keep Louisiana in a standby condition. Within six months or a year we will have to go back to a large-scale plant to demonstrate our latest findings." And last March, when J. J. Forbes, director of the Bureau of Mines, and Dr. Lewis McCabe, chief of the fuels and explosives division, appeared before the House subcommittee on appropriations, Dr. McCabe said: "What we would like to do is put the plant at Louisiana on a standby basis and let it stay there until such time as the new process would come in on a bigger scale." Dr. Forbes added: "They have only started and have made the first runs to get some basic information." Their testimony hardly indicates that the Bureau of Mines has learned everything it needs to know at Louisiana.

TWO ATOM-AGE FILMS

Camera on Hiroshima . . *by Alexander Werth*

Paris

I HAVE recently seen two films which, for one reason or another, have not been shown in the United States. They are very different; in fact, all they have in common is that both definitely belong to our ugly atomic age. I gather that the producers of the Japanese film, "Les Enfants de Hiroshima," thought—with perhaps exaggerated sensitivity—that it might offend Americans, though, heaven knows, there is nothing in the least anti-American about it. It is simply the most moving human document I know—apart from Hersey's book about Hiroshima—against atomic war as such, quite regardless of whether the bombs are made in the United States, in Russia, in Germany, in Japan, or anywhere else. The French film, "Avant le Deluge," is less convincing and less important; I understand that its exportation from France has been prohibited on the ground that it might be interpreted abroad as a true picture of present-day French youth—which of course it is not.

Unlike "Avant le Deluge," which has been drawing big crowds, "Les Enfants de Hiroshima" was shown in only one theater, which was usually at least one-third empty—a strange phenomenon when one thinks that the A-bomb and the H-bomb are the nightmare of our time. Or it may have been just because of that: people don't like to be reminded. Yet if I were the world's dictator, I would make this film compulsory education for all mankind.

It is not a violent film; it is an infinitely sad film. I have met scarcely any Japanese in my life, and what perhaps surprised me most about the film was the still, sad music of humanity that pervaded every inch of it. We have thought too long of Japan in terms of "We'll wipe each Jap, right off the map, heigh-ho, heigh-ho." Watching the picture one forgets Japanese militarism and Japanese atrocities and Pearl Harbor, and thinks only of the 200,000 people who were obliterated in a few seconds, and of the thousands and thousands more who were crippled and maimed.

But the Hiroshima film does not dwell on the horrors; the action takes place eight or nine years after the bomb fell. The bomb is only a memory, and the memory is condensed into a few unforgettable shots of a few seconds each—a tangle of naked women writhing in agony, a sunflower withering in two seconds. But the shadow of the bomb is over everything, and not only the shadow of the bomb that was dropped but also of the other bomb whose existence is suggested by the final shot of a plane high in the sky above the new, the reconstructed Hiroshima.

That is the horror of it; that the bomb of August 6, 1945, was not an isolated disaster, like the earthquake at Messina, unlikely to recur. What "Les Enfants de Hiroshima" implies most painfully is that there can be no joy in a new life, no faith in reconstruction, no consolation in "Let the dead past bury its dead." Even now everybody is partly dead. This partial death is reflected in the sterility of a young Japanese couple, in the blindness of an old man who in his despair sets fire to his hovel and dies in the flames, in the infinite sadness of the young school teacher who goes to Hiroshima to help a few of the survivors whom she knows.

Most poignant of all, perhaps, is the loveliness of the world around the city of death. The young school teacher comes to Hiroshima in a small ship, and

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as she looks at the hills and the clouds and the waves she seems to be on a pleasure cruise. The boys in the school yard at Hiroshima do their calisthenics, young people get married, and life seems to have started again; but it has not, for the "bomb illness" persists. And one wonders whether the young woman's decision to take the little boy away is really a happy ending. Any other place may become a Hiroshima.

The film has received high praise from the best film critics in France. "It over-shadows every other recent film we know," Deniel-Valcroze wrote in the *Observateur*. "It is the only truly atomic film we have seen, for it is not made up of technical or statistical material but is a long cry of pain, restrained, almost inaudible, but interminable—a cry of the revolt of one side of civilization against the other." Georges Sadoul wrote: "This young teacher's seemingly commonplace excursion is in reality a descent into the seven circles of hell, a journey to the far end of horror. The producer's great art was to say all this without raising his voice. If understatement is the mark of classic art, this is indeed a classic masterpiece."

COMPARED with "Les Enfants de Hiroshima," I do not think André Cayatte's "Avant le Deluge" is very significant, though it is exciting and most of the characters are marvelously well drawn. It purports to be an account of the young generation in France—the five heroes are only sixteen or seventeen years old. Fear of war underlies the whole story. When the Korean war starts, Philippe, whose rich father, has fled to Africa, finds himself in possession of a yacht, and he and his schoolfellows decide to go to the South Seas "to get away from it all." Needing more funds, they attempt a silly burglary, in the course of which a night watchman is killed. Seized by panic, four of them imagine that the fifth, a Jew, may betray them, and almost without knowing what they do, they drown him in his bath.

At the beginning and end of the film we see the culprits in the dock, with the lawyer and the judge trying to prove that the parents were more to blame than the young people. But none of this is convincing. The fact that one boy was brought up in an atmosphere of anti-Semitism does not explain the behavior of the others. And if the mother of one was too domineering and the parents of the girl too liberal, this hardly exonerates the children. Also, it is historically inaccurate to say that the Korean war produced in France anything like the panic that the film suggests.

If the film has any significance at all, it is less in the story itself than in its undertones, which suggest a general feeling of unsettlement, a disbelief in the virtues of capitalism, in racial equality, world government, and other democratic shibboleths. But the South Sea island and the yacht were surely clumsy symbols for putting this idea across. Or is there, ultimately, some significance in the fact that a seemingly quite incidental character who is a militant Communist is the only young person in the film who does not become involved in the crime?

LESSONS FROM MALAYA

2. The Critical Frontier . . *by Victor Purcell*

London

THE picture of the Far East generally accepted in Europe and America is that of an expanding Russo-Chinese communism held precariously in check by a chain of containment extending from Japan to Pakistan. Whatever their value as "links," all these countries adhere at least to the forms of democratic government, but since the chain is held together by Western, especially American, power, Asian nationalism—or, more accurately, Asian consciousness—is disposed to view its existence primarily as evidence of the continued physical presence of the West in Asia and therefore as an anachronism reluctantly to be tolererated. Only secondarily is it regarded as a means of keeping communism at bay. This psychological factor must not be forgotten, since it complicates any doctrinal or strategic approach to the problem.

In America and Western Europe those links of the chain which are directly held or influenced by the West are assumed to be the strongest—for example, South Korea, the Philippines, Malaya—while those that are independent but unstable politically, like Indonesia and Burma, are regarded as the least dependable. In my own view, the truth is the other way round, for unstable as these independent countries may be, they have so far remained outside the Communist bloc by their own choice, making no direct demands on Western man-power, while the directly garrisoned "links" depend on Western troops, as well as on other aid, for their continued existence.

The question now to the fore is whether, should Indo-China fall, Thailand could be made a second line of defense. From a strictly strategic point of view it seems that northern Thailand could easily be infiltrated from Vietnam —already there are some thousands of Vietnamese refugees in the eastern part —but the invasion of the isthmus south of Bangkok would probably require more air and naval power than the invader is likely to have.

Politically, however, the situation is much less simple. Thailand, although it has a "parliament," is ruled by an oligarchy relying on the support of the army. Ever since the "middle-class revolution" of 1932 two factions of the same ruling clique have alternately been in power. The present Prime Minister, Pibul Songkram (or Pibun Songgram

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—there is no standard method of spelling Siamese names), has proved the most agile of tight-rope walkers and the most versatile of quick-change artists: he was in power when Thailand declared war on the Allies in 1942 but, by a full swing of the pendulum, has become one of their greatest supporters. Now and again, however, he falters in his footing, and once for a moment he disappeared into the abyss. (The Thai navy, which uses the Premier's portrait as a dart board, kidnapped him and placed him on board a warship in the harbor. The Thai air force then took a hand, bombed the ship and sank it. Pibul swam to the shore—the wrong shore, held by the navy; but after lying in hiding until dark he swam to the right shore and the revolution was over.) The succession of coups and counter-coups, involving little loss of life, has given the Thai political drama the air of comic opera.

Thailand's comparatively strong economic position derives partly from its skill in changing sides at the right moment, thus avoiding the war devastation which overtook Burma, and partly from the fact that it is a great exporter of rice and, with Indo-China out of the market and Burma's output reduced by war and civil war, can fix its own prices —Malaya, a rice-deficiency area, in particular feels the pinch. The revenues from rice exports lighten the taxes, American dollar aid is there to help still more, and having no agrarian problem, Thailand has a contented peasantry. But apart from the inherent shortcomings of a dictatorship, Thailand has one great political weakness, namely, the presence of well over three million Chinese, probably amounting to a fifth of the total population. In the event of war with China they would certainly constitute a major threat. But the reliability of Thailand as a second line must depend to a great extent on the civil condition of Malaya.

THE present Communist rising in Malaya began in June, 1948. To deny food to the Communist guerrillas—"terrorists" or "bandits" as they are also called—the late High Commissioner Sir Henry Gurney (murdered by Communists on October 6, 1951), brought over half a million Chinese "squatters" from isolated clearings in the jungle into new villages behind barbed wire (the "Briggs Plan"). The effect of this was to compel the Communists to change their tactics. In a new directive dated October 1, 1951, the Malayan "Politburo" ordered that in future military operations and terrorism should be limited to specified targets, that the sabotage of industry should generally be discontinued, since rubber-tree-slashing and the like had alienated the workers, who depend on industry for their livelihood, and that the party should concentrate on the infiltration of labor. Until a translation of this directive was published in the London *Times* in December, 1952, it looked as if the ostensible improvement in the situation was due entirely to the energy and drive of General Templer, who had succeeded Sir Henry Gurney as High Commissioner. "Incidents," however, again increased in the last few months of his appointment.

General Templer

The situation at the time of the General's departure (May 31, 1954) can be summarized thus. The number of terrorists in the jungle was the same as it had been when he first arrived—namely, from five to six thousand—and they were still obtaining all the recruits they needed. In holding this small force some 40,000 troops—30,000 of them British and the rest Malays, Gurkhas, and so on—100,000 police, and over 200,000 home guards were employed. The number of terrorists who surrendered in 1953 was 370, or about one a day, though for the first four months of 1954 the surrenders have fallen to an average of only a little more than one every other day. The main force of the guerrillas is now in deep jungle, where it has planted food crops in clearings and is partially protected by a screen of aborigines—Jakun, Negritos, and the like, who total about 35,000.

Official propaganda at the moment has ceased to call attention to "kills" and "surrenders" and concentrates on the number of areas which have been declared "white," that is, free from Communist activity, and from which the emergency controls have been lifted. In late May these areas, mostly coastal strips, were stated to have 1,300,000 inhabitants—about a quarter of the total population of the federation. But how "white" these areas really are is a matter very much open to question. If the Communists are free to levy toll on an area there will be no "incidents," and to the naked eye a "red" and a "white" area will look equally undisturbed. The fact is, however, that the Communists are still able to stage incidents at will in thickly settled regions which are no more in the jungle than is Times Square. The Malayan war was correctly characterized by the Singapore correspondent of the London *Times* in October last as a "stalemate."

BUT even if the shooting war ended tomorrow, the problem of Malaya would be no nearer solution, being in essence political. Though General Templer was given full powers over the civil government as well as over military operations, his achievements on the political front are even less impressive than on the military one. He had been charged by Mr. Lyttelton, the Colonial Secretary, to "guide the people of Malaya to nationhood." In a plural community like Malaya this meant primarily healing the differences between the Malays and the Chinese, but what in fact the General did was to revive the obsolete and bankrupt policy of divide and rule without having the diplomatic finesse of the *ancien régime* to disguise the fact. He passed legislation discriminating against the Chinese in several spheres and so alienated them that very few Chinese recruits could be obtained for the police; the number of Chinese who joined the General's new

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Federation Regiment, intended to be the nucleus of a national army, up to November last was seventy-five! The net result of the General's drive for democracy was that at the time of his departure the legislature was still entirely nominated by himself and at least 30 per cent of the Chinese and 60 per cent of the Indians were still denied citizenship rights.

Even these meager results had been at the cost of creating nine new "nationalities" in a country the size of Florida—so that aliens could be made "subjects of the Sultans"—thus perpetuating pernicious if useful feudal fictions. One "nation," Perlis, had a population of less than 100,000. To let the people make a start at governing themselves, he had established village councils so bound round with restrictions and red tape as to make them, not children learning to walk, but feeble papooses. As a first step toward uniting Malaya, General Templer had riven it into nine splinter nationalities, surrounding each with a fence of legal barbed-wire; in pursuance of the aim of a common citizenship he had sidestepped equality and sown the seeds of nine warring loyalties; in implementing the aim of self-government he had conceded to a section of the people a restricted share in cranking their own parish pump.

But the full enormity of thinking a soldier of the General's autocratic temper could introduce democracy to Malaya is apparent only in a close-up view. He was, in fact, the most uncivilian-minded person who ever controlled the destinies of a people. His creed was that nothing that mattered ever came from "below," the people, but was bestowed as an act of grace from "above," by Mr. Lyttelton. For the British Crown he demanded a deference transcending loyalty. Thus he ordered a portrait of Sun Yat-sen removed from a Chinese school and that of the Queen alone to be displayed, and when a Malay member of the Federal Legislative Council who had witnessed the Coronation in the Abbey published an account of it in which he paid respectful tribute to her Majesty but made a playful reference to Sir Winston Churchill's standing up and sitting down in the wrong places, General Templer sent for him and called him "a rat and a rotten journalist whose name stinks in Southeast Asia," challenging him to publish this encomium, which he did. A bandit-killing book called "Jungle Green," in which the people of Malaya are called "niggers" and the Chinese community "bastards" and "dirty Chinks," the General publicly indorsed as "authentic" and wished it success. *Time* magazine has placed on record its impression of the General in action on the civilian front—his upper teeth bared to the gums in rage, his "thin-lipped tigerish sneer," and his "smile like a soundless snarl." His technique in remolding a likely instrument of his will was to obliterate his personality in an overpowering onslaught and then to call him "old cock" and stand him a drink. Malaya was soon full of human beings who had been broken like horses.

This was the lighter side of the General's character; the darker side, and that more lastingly injurious to the British reputation, was displayed in his collective punishments, including the razing of one village to the ground, his curfews, and his rice rationing. Under the new dispensation, the bandits became "dogs and foxes" to be hunted down, championship shields were competed for by bandit-slaughtering troops and police, and the dead body of a woman bandit was exhibited outside a police station. Since the avowed aim of the government was to win "the hearts and minds of the people"—blood relations incidentally of the "dogs and foxes"—the Templer experiment was like trying to mend a watch with a blunt hatchet.

GENERAL TEMPLER has gone, but the problem of Malaya remains. Stated in the simplest terms it is this—either the country will quickly obtain the means and the power to govern itself or it will in the end become Communist. It must either become another India or another China. Only an independent, self-respecting Malaya with a will to defend itself from outside interference and with its own national army can effectively counter Communist threats, either internal or external. If for any reason the British troops were withdrawn, Malaya, with no knowledge of self-government and without a national civil service, would be at the mercy of the Malayan Communist Party, the only organization ready to fill the vacuum.

The most promising development on the Malayan political front is the growing influence of the alliance between the United Malay National Organization (U. M. N. O.) and the Malayan Chinese Association (M. C. A.). Yet when a U. M. N. O.-M. C. A. delegation came to London in April-May this year to demand a legislature with a modest 60 per cent elected majority, Mr. Lyttelton refused to accede to the request. The result may well be the withdrawal of the U. M. N. O.-M. C. A. members from the legislative and also the municipal councils—to which they were elected by larger votes than any of the other members. The present autocratic government will then be left more out in the cold than ever.

Unless free elections are held in Malaya, with the emergency regulations lifted, the people will never have a chance to learn to govern themselves and to eliminate communal differences, as free elections have done in Ceylon. Such an experiment involves risks, no doubt, but the alternative is a continued despotism in which liberal elements turn in despair to the left and an alien regime is indefinitely propped up by troops and police.

Democratic Bastion?

ONCE Thailand approached the definition of a democratic state. But in the past few years a tremendous military build-up and the widening corruption of the Pibun Songgram regime have practically done democracy to death. . . . The Police Department issued a statement denying . . . that the Songgram Coup Party had "made full preparations to flee the country; that the financial situation is deteriorating; that public morality has deteriorated to its lowest depths; that there is no justice in the administration; and that corruption is rife among government circles." The denial . . . lists rather accurately the poisons which are infecting the body politic of Thailand.

Thailand is anti-Communist. But it is far less democratic than before the American aid program began. —*From a Report on Thailand by Richard Deverell, representative in Asia of the American Federation of Labor.*

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BOOKS

Strictness and Faithfulness

THE LYSISTRATA OF ARISTOPHANES. By Dudley Fitts. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.

THE FABLES OF LA FONTAINE. Translated by Marianne Moore. The Viking Press. $5.

By John Ciardi

MISS MOORE, in undertaking "The Fables," has based her method on Pound's practice as a translator, attempting to reproduce every rhythm and every rhyme while maintaining natural word order, the active voice, natural sentence structure and idiom. A superb theory but an impossible one, which neither Pound nor Miss Moore—nor for that matter anyone else—can begin to put into practice.

What, one must ask, is a translation? And for whom? The Poundian theory implies a display of virtuosity which is observable only by those who can read the original. What does it matter that Pound has "reproduced" Cavalcanti's "exact" rhythm and rhyme scheme unless one reads the translation with the original before him? And in that case why not read the original? If, on the other hand, one is reading in English in the hope of finding a self-sustaining English poem that attempts to convey the force of the original, this sort of "exactness" is irrelevant.

Dudley Fitts, on what seems to me a much better-conceived theory of translation, has gone for "faithfulness" rather than "strictness," with the result that his "Lysistrata" comes through as a powerful experience in English. As a non-reader of Greek I had previously known the "Lysistrata" only in two feeble translations that may have caught the words but certainly missed the force, the tragedy, and the great roaring bawdiness of Aristophanes. With this rendering by Fitts I have found the play for the first time, an experience in delight.

A "strict" rendering of a sample speech (by Lysistrata), for example, runs so: "You have not bestirred yourself overmuch for an affair of such urgency." Fitts renders it: "After all,/ you've been pretty casual about the whole thing."

I have not the least doubt that the first rendering is philologically more accurate. I am equally certain that it is not the way any English-speaking person would phrase it. It comes out, rather, in translatorese, that queer language-of-the-study that counts words but misses their living force.

So again in a later speech, when Myrrhine has left Kinesias panting in frustrated heat, the Chorus says (strict word-count): "Poor miserable wretch, balked in your amorousness! What tortures are yours! Ah, you fill me with pity. Could any man's back and loins stand such a strain?"

Fitts renders:

> She's left you in a sorry state.
> You have my sympathy.
> What upright citizen could bear
> Your pain? I swear not I!

Whether or not the phallic pun on "upright citizen" is precisely in the original, the method of it is true to Aristophanes, and the communication of it is certainly faithful. Aristophanes, after all, went for what *Variety* calls the "boff." He wrote for the theater. And what would his audience—holding its sides at a good raucous piece of bladder-flailing—care for the derivation of the gag? What it wanted was a gag it could respond to. And Fitts delivers it with an assurance that would certainly have delighted the old goat himself. A masterwork of translation, even for Fitts, and as actable in this version as it was at its first production. The censor be damned: if this play doesn't reach Broadway the theater-goer will have been defrauded of a great experience.

MISS MOORE'S work was cut to a very different order by the nature of La Fontaine's writing. The fact is that a long poem is more easily translated than a short one, for the simple reason that the total structure of the longer work helps the translator over many of his problems. If I set out to reproduce a cathedral, I can chip a column or two without bringing the structure down, but if I step on a miniature I happen to be working on, I have destroyed everything: the scratch marks cannot be hid.

Miss Moore is working on the smaller—and tighter—scale, and the scratch marks cannot help showing. Her happiest achievements seem to happen when the result is most like an original Marianne Moore poem, as in her own two favorites, "Bitch and Friend" and "The Dog Who Dropped Substance for Shadow." But it is precisely in her best successes that Miss Moore seems to walk away from the Poundian theory: rather, something in the poem catches fire, and the rendering leaves the "strict" to go for the "faithful." At these points the words are usually farthest from La Fontaine's, but the experience and the structure of the poem come closest.

It is the general rightness of the tone that makes Miss Moore's rendition remarkable. Her own witty pedantry, dry precision, and passionate sense of form are so nearly identical with La Fontaine's that they go far toward overcoming all objection. Nevertheless, one is too often conscious of what a hard time Miss Moore is having with her details, which, like her language, are constantly being buffeted about by the overbearing demands of the rhyme. Hardly a poem is free of rhyme-forced breaks in word order and idiom, or of rhyme-forced paddings and tautologies. Nor is the rhyme itself always happy, as such sore-thumb rhymes as "fool" and "venerable" (venerabool?) attest.

The amazement is that Miss Moore has done it so well on such impossible premises. The pity is that she did not set out to do what La Fontaine himself did when he took his "Fables" from the Greek and Latin—that is, not to "translate" them but to remake them into his own language. With Miss Moore's great and especially apt gifts, that could have been a book forever.

JOHN CIARDI, author of "From Time to Time" and other books of verse, will soon publish a translation of Dante's "Inferno." He regularly reviews poetry for The Nation.

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Facts of Life—and Death

THE BLACK SWAN. By Thomas Mann. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.75.

By Carlos Baker

IF THERE were any doubt that Thomas Mann is one of the great men of modern fiction, it would be immediately dispelled by this excellent new short novel, written in Switzerland in 1952, published in Germany in 1953, and now issued here in a highly satisfactory translation by Willard R. Trask. Far from showing any diminution of powers, Mann approaches eighty in full and easy mastery of the narrative arts. One doubts, indeed, that so nearly absolute a domination of the intricate chords which chime together in this subtle and ironic tale would have been possible to a writer of fewer years and more limited experience.

Mann has never shirked, he has even sought, the most difficult and perhaps unlikely subjects. "The Magic Mountain" is an example from a period now over twenty-five years back: how to treat with wit and wisdom the microcosm of a sanitarium full of dying people in such a way that it would image forth the human predicament in the world at large. The subject of "The Black Swan," the menopause in women, would seem to belong to the category of unlikely possibilities. A problem wholly suitable for medical and psychiatric exploration, it has been thumbed and shopworn in dozens of "how-to-live" books, and handled with a mixture of the maudlin and the pseudo-mystical through—no doubt—innumerable instances of fourth-rate fiction. Yet this complex phenomenon is one of the universals. It stands ready to be explored by any artist whose skills are sufficiently developed. Mann qualifies by demonstration. He knows, has always known, how to engage the attributes of dignity and weight. His sentiment never here degenerates to sentimentality, his irony never becomes a bludgeon, and the subject firmly responds to his compassion and good taste.

The protagonist, Frau Rosalie von Tümmler, is a handsome, warm-hearted widow living quietly with her grown children, Anna (twenty-nine) and Eduard (seventeen), in the city of Düsseldorf during the 1920's. Gregarious and cheerful, she cannot help resenting the facts that her hair, though abundant and wavy, is quite gray, that her delicate hands show signs of aging, and that her nose tends to redden slightly in animated company, as on the occasion of the toast-drinking at her fiftieth birthday party. An ardent worshiper of nature, she regards as somehow unnatural "the critical organic phenomena of her time of life" which have adversely affected her normal good health. Despite the ostensible simplicity of her character, or perhaps because of it, she develops a marked psychological resistance to the evidence that "her physical womanhood" is in process of extinction.

Rosalie's closest friend, the unmarried Anna, is as much a child of the intellect as her mother is a daughter of the earth. Born with a club foot, she has become in early spinsterhood a talented painter of abstractions, as if, for understandable reasons, she disliked to face the unreconstructed facts of nature. Her one love affair now seems shameful to her, not

"A truly splendid achievement . . ."

SAYS PROFESSOR HANS KOHN OF

Freedom Against Itself

By CLARENCE K. STREIT

¶ Published by Harpers, this is a new major work by the author of the now-classic *Union Now* who for many years was a *New York Times* foreign correspondent. With his unusually keen perception of things political, Mr. Streit conducts an inquiry into two aspects of freedom: its relationship to invention and discovery; its relationship to international organization and government. Here, for anyone interested in the problems of peace and war, is fresh insight into the tensions splintering the free world while the Soviet bloc consolidates itself. A significant book for yourself . . . and to give to others.

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because it came to nothing—though through her coldness it eventually did—but rather because she had permitted her emotions to become involved. Her great sympathy with her mother's situation is therefore colored by the counsels of reason. Rosalie ought, thinks Anna, to accept with grace the inevitability of the aging process.

Mann's three-part structure opens with this situation. Into it, like a catalyst, comes a young American, Ken Keaton, recently a soldier and now, in a guileless fashion, a soldier of fortune. Keaton's athletic physique and easy amiability combine to make him a popular guest in the local salons. Soon he is retained as English-language tutor to Rosalie's son, and Rosalie herself has shortly fallen very thoroughly in love with him. Her delight and pride are immense, therefore, when she is one day able to tell her daughter that the nature in which she trusts and believes has—it seems miraculously—given her a sign that her capacity for reproduction is not yet extinct. An alliance with Keaton now seems possible.

The third part, the obligatory scene, occurs at Holterhof Castle, to which Rosalie with her two children and the young American are making a holiday visit. Here, in a mold-strewn secret passage which the pair have penetrated together, Rosalie makes her passionate declaration of love to Keaton and arranges an assignation. But the passage smells of death. Instead of this place, says Rosalie, the episode ought to have occurred "in kind nature's lap," among the jasmines and the alders, or perhaps by the castle moat where she has just fed a black swan with morsels of bread still warm from Keaton's pocket. Why was it that the swan hissed so angrily when Rosalie ate some of the bread which would otherwise have been tossed to him? Mann's swift dénouement provides the answer. The sign which Rosalie interpreted as the miraculous return of her womanhood was in fact the first evidence of advanced uterine cancer. The assignation never occurs. In a month Rosalie is dead.

Thus badly restated, the fable might seem obvious, even trite. What gives the book its remarkable distinction is Mann's sure conduct of the narrative. It is beautifully structured, rigorously pruned of textural irrelevancies. But it is also astutely planted with natural metaphors. Their roots interlock below ground level in such a way that the careful reader is made aware, almost unconsciously, of dozens of subtle connections among them. Under its calm surface the novel teems with the interactivity of the natural psychological facts of life, including the fact of death. Through the medium of his art form Mann has achieved an act of wisdom.

CARLOS BAKER is chairman of the Department of English at Princeton.

New Books in Brief

Poetry to the Glory of God

GEORGE HERBERT: HIS RELIGION AND ART. By Joseph H. Summers. Harvard. $4.25.

George Herbert seemed able to bend meter, imagery, and diction to the requirements of meaning almost at will. When he writes of mortality, the lines of his poem have a falling rhythm. His metaphors are chosen, not for ornament or color, but for their exact correspondence to his ideas. When his subject is doubt or chaos, the verse threshes about violently, but as the orderly scheme of creation is asserted at the end of the poem, the smooth regularity of a poetic pattern appears. Most of his poems end in calmness, for to Herbert poetry was an instrument of religion to be used for spiritual ends, a way of revealing God and bringing comfort to man. Professor Summers's fine study brings to life aesthetic qualities of the poems which have been lost to the general reader in the course of time, and shows that they were created in a religious spirit. Herbert thought that the beauty of poetry, like that of religious ritual, reflected the glory of God. Poetic form was a counterpart of the reason and order appropriate to worship. His poetry is a remarkable union of content and form, spirit and technique. But it is impossible to appreciate his work fully without a knowledge of the symbolism and church tradition he made use of, and the background material supplied by Professor Summers enables the reader to grasp the general spirit of Herbert's poems as well

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as many fine touches of craft which are generally overlooked in his direct and fervent declarations of faith.

Shandean Novel

RILEY MC CULLOUGH. By Carl Jonas. Little, Brown. $3.95.

After an amateur performance of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Riley's mother, drunk with poetry, had run into the cornfield, no doubt expecting W. W. Westward to follow. Unhappily for Riley, it was not W. W. but B. P. McCullough, conventional and unimaginative, later to be a police judge, who became Riley's father thirteen years afterward. (Riley, dabbling in "cogitology" as an easy way to make a living, has learned from this pseudo-science to explore ancestral memories.) Naturally he resents—if that is not too strong a word—this switch.

Bilked of the fathership of old W. W., ex-Senator, ex-millionaire, ex-convict, Riley was ready to settle for being his son-in-law. Besides, his cousin Anastasia—for W. W. married B. P.'s sister—was as strongly individual as her father or Riley himself. Trouble was, Riley, in the Coast Guard—one step ahead of the draft board—married Emily, who needed a father for her unborn child and thought Riley preferable to the actual begetter. Though divorced he was still pursued by Emily far more purposefully than he in turn pursued Stasie.

The satire's central episode finds Riley, wearing only a trench coat, standing on the parapet of the old Commercial Hotel (not the respectable *new* Commercial Hotel) with the crowd below urging him not to jump. He had no such intention; his presence on the ledge was perfectly reasonable if unconventional, but the crowd, adjusted to newspaper and magazine accounts and popular philosophizing in psychoanalytic jargon, could not imagine any purpose but suicide. "Don't jump!" they shouted, meaning, as Riley realized, "Jump!" and even his nonconformity began to weaken after hours of the hypnotic command. He was on the point of yielding, of finally adjusting, when Stasie called up, "I dare you to jump!" His sanity saved, he retreated into the arms of the waiting policeman—transparently disguised as a bell-boy—and got a sixty-day sentence from Judge B. P. McCullough, barely escaping shock-therapy by an eager psychiatrist.

"Riley McCullough" is alternately deft and savage. Some of the monsters jabbed by Mr. Jonas are already dead horses, like dianetics. Others are very much alive, and will unfortunately survive his belaboring, but we can be grateful for the blows he does get in, in the most satisfying novel this reviewer has read in years.

Arctic Popularizer

ELISHA KENT KANE AND THE SEAFARING FRONTIER. By Jeannette Mirsky. The Library of American Biography. Edited by Oscar Handlin. Little, Brown. $3.

High-latitude adventure caught the imagination of the American public a century ago in a way difficult for us to comprehend. Today anyone with the necessary documentation can visit Thule in northwest Greenland or circle the North Pole during a leisurely week-end. A century ago even Davis Strait and Baffin Bay were inaccessible except to tough and experienced whalers who sought wealth but often found disaster. And travel books were rarely among the dividends.

Elisha Kent Kane, well-educated son of a socially prominent Philadelphia family, changed all that. He not only wintered beyond Baffin Bay and survived some of the harshest treatment the Arctic could offer; he brought it all back with him, and through his immensely popular writings gave it a place in the drawing-room, the library, and the lecture hall. In the seven years between his first voyage in 1850 and his early death at thirty-seven, Kane linked the United States to Arctic exploration so firmly that his spiritual descendants are even now manning scientific stations only a few hundred miles from the Pole itself. Kane's two Arctic voyages failed to achieve their original purpose of locating the lost Franklin expedition, and his geographical discoveries were unimportant. However, the rugged Arctic apprenticeship he went through enabled him to master some of the secrets of the Eskimo's successful living. His legacy of understanding, passed on and refined by later explorers, eventually carried Peary to the Pole.

Jeannette Mirsky has written a vivid and thought-provoking account of the conversion of an eccentric Philadelphia socialite into a pioneer of scientific polar exploration.

Man Devalued

THE AMERICAN ANARCHY. By Lionel Gelber. Schuman. $3.50.

This is a significant discussion of perhaps the most important question of our era: how can the liberal, humanistic values of democracy survive in a bureaucratic and collectivized society? Man versus technology remains the major issue of the twentieth century. The danger lies in the fact that "while most free citizens of a modern democracy would resist a frontal attack on their liberties, they will not band together against an erosion which is surreptitious, hard to discern or pin down, indefinable in detail but cumulatively definite."

Mr. Gelber is too realistic to suggest that we can repeal the organizational revolution. In effect he issues a call for analysis, thinking, and social invention to deal with the basic issue of rendering power visible and responsible. Although he has few suggestions to make, his contribution is valuable because he traces the ramifications of large-scale organization through every facet of our lives. Not only is man being devalued in the Soviet Union; even in the Western democracies "much that purports to revalue may do the reverse." He reminds liberals that organization is essential for the promotion and protection of liberty. The democratic state protects the individual from lawless intimidation, but not from intimidations that are lawful but unjust.

Mr. Gelber has some useful observations on our current addiction to the use of ex-Communists as "expert" witnesses. He reminds us that "fanaticisms alter. Mentalities do not." It is true that the "disaster potential" of a single episode like that of Fuchs "has never before been so high," but it is worth while to recall the damage wrought by irresponsible "political experts" in making more acute the pre-war irresponsibility of the English-speaking democracies in world affairs. Candor compels admission that "irresponsibility in the defense of our free society has . . . had, during the twentieth century, no one source."

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Remember how McCarthy falsely smeared former Secretary of State Marshall as an "arch-traitor of his country."

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ARMY SECRETARY STEVENS IS A REPUBLICAN

Been reading the newspapers lately? Or getting what comes over the air from Washington?

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Theater

Harold Clurman

BEFORE we had an original and serious American drama, we had an original and "unserious" American theater in the form of musical comedy. There are pedants who deny that our musical comedy is original, but—no matter! There are others who deny the value of American dramaturgy, even though it is hard to name any other which at present excels ours.

Be that as it may, in speaking of the contribution made by the American theater beginning with the twenties, we usually fail to point with (a little) pride to the generic masterpiece which the American musical comedy is. Stark Young, our finest theater critic between 1922 and 1947, hardly ever went to see —and almost never willingly reviewed —a musical.

On those occasions on which we speak despondently about the state of the American theater most of us overlook the steady excellence of our musical-comedy stage. One reason for this, I suppose, is that if we examine each element of a musical comedy separately and judge it from an exalted standard of ideas, writing, music, and so on, we may find ourselves discouraged. (In these respects our musicals are far inferior to Offenbach's comic operas, which are of course true works of art.) But the sum of our musicals is greater than their parts. I do not speak of individual shows so much as of the long line of musicals from, let us say, 1910 to the present taken as a total body of work.

The other day I noticed an item in a column of theatrical statistics which pointed out that of the twenty-two shows running in New York at that moment eight were musicals, one was the solo Victor Borge, another a revival of "The Seagull." The rest were straight comedies. The proportion seems typical of the entire period since the war. And I am inclined to think that the musicals —none of which are at this time the most memorable of my experience— probably reveal a greater degree of talent than the "serious" plays.

This may be a warped view, equivalent to my feverish enthusiasm, in 1922, when I returned from a winter in Paris, on seeing the "Ziegfeld Follies." "This is as admirably American," I told myself out loud, "as the novels of Scott Fitzgerald and Sinclair Lewis." Exaggerated, no doubt, but the point is that the show —among whose players were Will Rogers, W. C. Fields, Fannie Brice, and the Prettiest Girls in the World—seemed to me symbolical of the energy, humor, silken lushness, cosmopolitanism, and ebullient hedonism of an America drunk with its own youthful success. So, in various ways the American musical manages to express certain basic American gifts and qualities.

One of the most permanent and ineradicable of American ideals embodied in the musicals is the ideal of having fun and a good time. There is a certain innocence—often an adulterated innocence but innocence none the less—in this. But it is so deep-rooted, so historically justified, so physically essential, so desperately sought after, that it has created a host of genuinely expert devotees in the theatrical world.

The demand for real craftsmanship in "legitimate" drama is only sporadically heeded because such drama itself stands on a shaky foundation. One is never quite sure that drama is truly desired, since support for it is so uncertain. But there is little question of our need for the lighter entertainments. And in these fields people learn their business. They have to, the competition is so keen and the audience so aware.

Deborah Kerr and Audrey Hepburn are very nice, but can anyone soberly maintain that they have perfected themselves in their craft to the degree that even such a beginner as Carol Haney has in her medium? How many "legitimate" actors are as legitimate craftsmen as Ray Bolger? How many as professionally knowing as Jimmy Durante or Ethel Merman? For that matter, how many dramatists have pursued their careers with the consistency of a Jerome Kern, a George Gershwin, a Cole Porter, a Richard Rodgers? Not many of our directors are as painstaking and artistically ambitious as Agnes de Mille, Jerome Robbins, Mike Kidd.

The retort to these somewhat rhetorical statements and questions may be that in the first place musical comedy pays better than any other "line" in the theater and that furthermore the problems of the legitimate theater are intrinsically more profound as well as organizationally and economically more difficult. If so, the theater worker who pretends to serious creative work must not only emulate the protracted and strenuous effort of those engaged in musical comedy but even go beyond them. It would not be too much to say, in fact, that the person who enters the non-musical theater today requires, besides talent, an almost heroic capacity for work and great moral stamina. Perhaps that is why so many of our younger actors are now trying to acquire the disciplines and accomplishments of the musical-comedy performers. For it may take some time for our legitimate theater to achieve within its own range the completeness of our best musicals.

Records

B. H. Haggin

LONDON'S new recording of Handel's "Messiah" is one of the year's important events. For in place of the work as we have always heard it, performed with a huge chorus and a large orchestra including winds added by Mozart and later editors, it offers us an approximation of the work as it was first performed in Dublin in 1742, with small chorus and orchestra of strings, trumpets, and drums, and harpsichord and organ for the continuo. This gives us something like the original texture, which is ear-ravishing as produced by the London Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra and reproduced by the recording. The more regrettable, therefore, that we get the solo vocal parts again without the ornamentation which smoothed out their angularities at that first per-

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formance; also that we don't get the double-dotting—e.g. in the overture—which occurred at that performance; and that instead of the single violin and cello in *I know that my Redeemer liveth* we get violins and basses which are too heavy for the harpsichord inbetween. The harpsichord-playing of George Malcolm, incidentally, is some of the most beautiful I have ever heard, and is for once clearly audible. Of the soloists Jennifer Vyvyan, the soprano, and Norma Procter, the contralto, are good; George Maran, the tenor, and Owen Brannigan, the bass, fair. Boult's excessively slow tempo for the overture creates fears which turn out to be justified by only two or three other poor tempos: most of the work he paces effectively.

I have just noticed the statement in the accompanying notes that the strings are "strengthened by flutes, oboes, bassoons"; and it is quite possible that for later English performances Handel added the oboes and bassoons he used customarily; but I don't remember hearing them in this recorded performance, and I haven't time to listen to it again.

The lovely vocal polyphony of Palestrina's Missa Papae Marcelli is sung beautifully by the Netherlands Chamber Choir under Felix de Nobel. On the same Epic record are good pieces by Ockeghem, Josquin, Lassus, and other Lowlands composers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

An unfamiliar work of Dvorak, his Stabat Mater Op. 58, is sung by Czech soloists and chorus with the Czech Philharmonic under Talich (Urania). The writing is melodious, dramatic, effective, but too long-drawn-out. The solo bass is very good; the soprano has a tremolo; the tenor and contralto are adequate; the chorus is good; the orchestra is excellent.

The Bach Guild gives us Bach's Art of Fugue played on the harpsichord by Gustav Leonhardt. He may be right in thinking the work was written for this instrument; but whereas I have found a performance by string quartet a wonderful experience I find the work impossible to listen to as Mr. Leonhardt pounds it out relentlessly, and as this assault on the ears is aggravated by recording that seems to have placed the microphone too close.

Vanguard has issued as A Sonata Recital by David Oistrakh three more works that he recorded in Paris last year: Leclair's Sonata Op. 9 No. 3, Beethoven's Sonata Op. 47 ("Kreutzer"), and Ysaye's Sonata Op. 27 No. 3 for violin solo. Leclair's is rather lovely; Ysaye's I find uninteresting as music, but it may interest violinists with all that it calls on the player to do with the instrument. Oistrakh's playing in the Leclair and Beethoven pieces is very fine, except for a lack of the grace one expects in Variation 2 of the second movement of the Beethoven. Lev Oborin is the excellent pianist in the Beethoven; Vladimir Yampolsky provides the modest piano accompaniment in the Leclair.

Of the three Delius works played by Anthony Collins with the London Symphony on a London record "In a Summer Garden" is a long piece of exquisite impressionistic writing; "Summer Night on the River" is a shorter piece of such writing; and "Paris: The Song of a Great City," an early work, has some beautiful quiet writing at the beginning and end, but gets to be rather tawdry inbetween. The performances are excellent and reproduced superbly—i.e., with the full, radiant, and lustrous violin sound that is so often lacking in London's orchestral recordings.

The musicians who played with the Azuma Kabuki Dancers on their recent American tour are heard in some of their performances on a Columbia LP; and I find again that Japanese music and I are not for each other.

On the other hand I have had great pleasure from the recordings of American bird songs issued by Cornell University Records, a division of Cornell University Press. The ones in American Bird Songs Volume Two have been put on an LP record; the ones in Volume One are on six 10-inch 78's. Some of these, with additions, are also on the single 10-inch 78's Western Bird Songs and Florida Bird Songs; and on another such 10-incher, The Mockingbird Sings, this delightful performer is heard not only in its own song but in its imitations of the songs of about thirty other birds.

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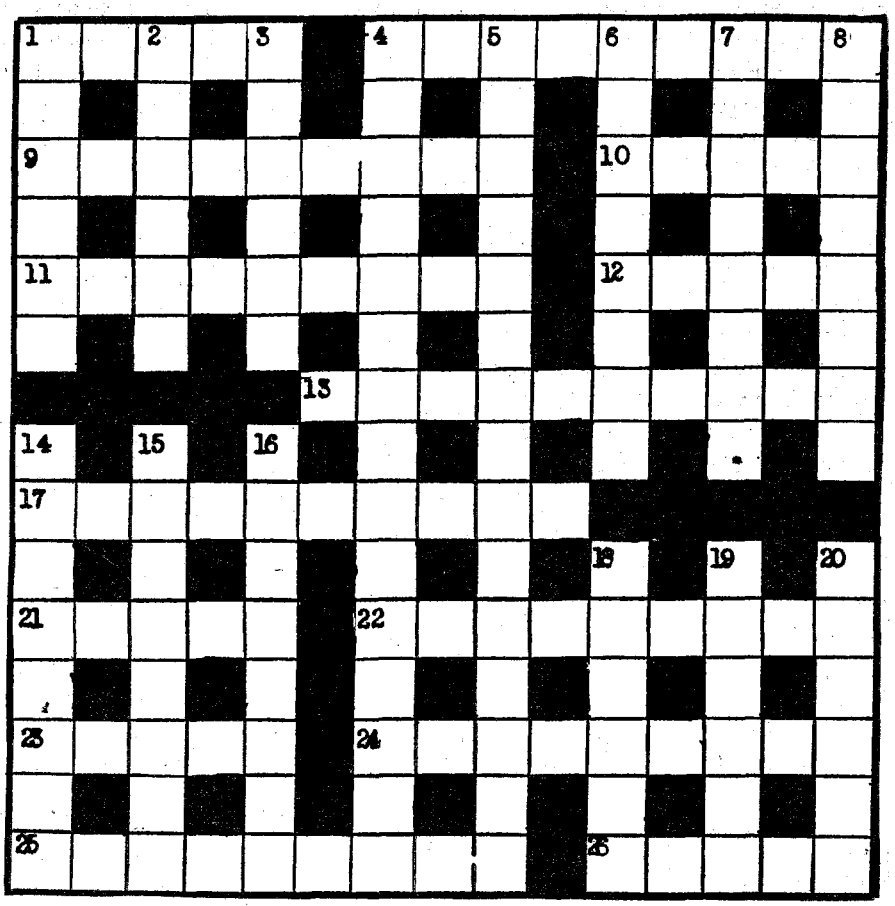
Crossword Puzzle No. 572

BY FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 A horse that might be good for a few more miles on the way back. (5)
4 Quite the opposite of a cloud-seeding as a form of admission. (4–5)
9 Just beyond 3-D bounds? (4, 5)
10 Rogers was a tricky one. (5)
11 Club for men in uniform. (9)
12 Their driving force doesn't fulfill a pressing need. (5)
13 Hope, like the confused type supply, perhaps. (10)
17 Disposition of troops, but not for Siam! (10)
21 Doesn't sound like a capital girl. (5)
22 U-material is dangerous at times. (9)
23 Pat lower house, and I return to the story. (5)
24 Sounds like sleeping bags are just the things for hikers. (9)
25 Glorifies henna rinses without an attempt to disguise them. (9)
26 This is all that had to hold the rope originally. (5)

DOWN

1 Little something cute to tie in a knot. (6)
2 We're tented on the grounds? (6)
3 "Scooped from the sacred earth where his dear _____ lie." (Wordsworth) (6)
4 He was surprised that someone knew his name. (15)
5 Deliberate amatory gesture (to the tune of "Would You Like to Take a Walk?") (11, 4)
6 and 14. Sounds like a fair tune for the trumpeter. (8, 2, 6)
7 Sounds good, yet sounds as though you're calling someone's bluff. (8)
8 If you bend the knee, it's painful to get up in it. (8)
14 See 6 down.
15 I'm surrounded by winds, but still on course. (8)
16 It shows the day is clear and yet unsettled. (8)
18 Takes one's arm, perhaps, in a playful mood. (6)
19 Hints of good taste, no doubt. (6)
20 The girl with the delicate air comes up to briefly state this. (6)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 571

ACROSS:—1 CAPARISON; 6 RENEW; 9 PARED; 10 PARAPETED; 11 NUX VOMICA; 12 ISSUE; 13 MUSIC; 15 TELEVISED; 18 DESTROYED; 19 DAISY; 20 TAKES; 22 LABORIOUS; 25 TELEMETER; 26 NONCE; 27 SIKES; 28 REST CURES.

DOWN:—1 CAPON; 2 PAROXYSMS; 3 RADIO; 4 SOPHISTRY; 5 NERVA; 6 REPRIEVED; 7 NOTES; 8 WEDNESDAY; 13 MEDITATES; 14 CHRISTMAS; 16 LADYBIRDS; 17 SHIPOWNER; 21 KULAK; 22 LITER; 23 RUNIC; 24 SHEDS.

Readers are invited to send for a free copy of Mr. Lewis's "ground rules." Address requests to Puzzle Dept., The Nation, 333 Sixth Avenue, New York 14, New York.

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(Continued from inside front cover)

of delinquency, which often puts the major responsibility on the schools without regard to other factors. My congratulations to *The Nation* for this and other contributions to sound thinking in the field of education.

EDWARD M. TUTTLE,
Executive Secretary, National School Boards Association
Chicago, Ill.

Ask the Vietnamese

Dear Sirs: In your June 5 issue David Schoenbrun suggests we could win a military stalemate in Indo-China with a vigorous field commander, reinforcements as a sign of support from the home fronts, and full use of the Vietnam army, untrained as it is—in short, more war.

We have had all of these things before, and the horrible harvest is before our eyes. General de Lattre with ample arms could not break a guerrilla movement based in the people, and another de Lattre will fare as ill. We cannot have a military settlement without committing ourselves to a political position. Perhaps the Vietnamese want Ho Chi-minh. America may have an interest in Vietnam. So do its own people. It's time we thought of them.

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THE *Nation's* CHOICE

NUMBER 4

JUST WHERE does man think he's going? For most of us, life is too pressing to take the time out to think about such matters. That's why The Nation's Choice editors seized so eagerly, for their No. 4 selections, on the current works of Joseph Wood Krutch and David Cort. Here are a pair of tough-minded gentlemen who *have* seen the need and *have* taken the time to assess a fundamental problem: man and his place in a world growing increasingly mechanistic. What are their answers? Whether you agree or disagree with their answers you'll find both books provocative and stimulating.

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